

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 05556 281707Z

ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 /075 W

-----122695 281730Z /50

O 281631Z NOV 77

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8622

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 5556

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, HO, ES

SUBJECT: CONTINUING REACTION TO BORDER INCIDENT

REF: (A) TEGUCIGALPA 5505 (DTG 231701Z NOV 77), (B) SAN SALVADOR
5428 (DTG 232225Z NOV 77)

1. ARMED FORCES ISSUED ANOTHER COMMUNIQUE (NO. 114) DENYING
GOES ACCUSATIONS OF HONDURAN VIOLATION OF SALVADORAN TERRITORY,
ESPECIALLY AN ALLEGED SECOND INCURSION. COMMUNIQUE EXPRESSES
ARMED FORCES "SURPRISE" THAT GOES MADE THESE CHARGES WHEN MEDIATION
AGREEMENT RATIFICATIONS WERE BEING EXCHANGED AND REPEATS THAT
THE ONLY INCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED WAS THAT DESCRIBED IN PREVIOUS
COMMUNIQUE (REF A).

2. PUBLIC REACTION IN GENERAL HAS BEEN SIMILAR TO THAT
ALREADY REPORTED. TWO NEWSPAPERS EDITORIALIZED ON THE "SUSPICIOUS
TIMING" OF THE INCIDENT, IMPLYING THAT IT SOMEHOW DUE TO SALVADORAN
PLANS TO DELAY NEGOTIATIONS OR WORSE.

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3. AS MEMBER OF THE OAS OBSERVER TEAM TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE INCIDENT
TOOK PLACE IN THE DISPUTED ZONE (WHICH THE GOES HAS ALWAYS
IDENTIFIED PUBLICLY AS SALVADORAN), WHERE NO MILITARY PATROLS
ARE SUPPOSED TO ENTER. HE ADDED THAT THE DEAD CAMPESINO
WAS NOT A NEWCOMER TO THE AREA. HE WAS A LONG-TIME RESIDENT
AND UNARMED, EXCEPT WITH A MACHETE. HOWEVER, HE ALSO
CONFIRMED THAT THE GOH HAS LONG BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT

THE INFILTRATION OF SALVADORAN SETTLERS, UNDER GOES
AUSPICES, INTO THE DISPUTED AREAS AND HAD RAISED THE ISSUE
WITH THE OAS AT THE NOVEMBER 15 MEETING, AS DESCRIBED
IN COMMUNIQUE NO. 113.

4. COMMENT: NO QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN RAISED IN PUBLIC ABOUT THE
ACCURACY OR INACCURACY OF EITHER GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENTS, ALTHOUGH
SOMETHING IS OBVIOUSLY AMISS. THE ASSUMPTION HERE IS THAT
THE GOH IS TELLING THE TRUTH, AND THE GOES IS NOT, AGAIN
DEMONSTRATING DEEPLY FELT EMOTIONS JUST UNDER THE SURFACE.
THESE EMOTIONS MAY BE STRONGER THERE THAN IN SALVADOR
BECAUSE GOH DOES NOT HAVE DIFFICULT AND DISTRACTING
INTERNAL PROBLEMS FACED BY GOES AND HONDURANS FEEL
THEMSELVES THE AGGRIEVED, ATTACKED PARTY.

5. EMBASSY HAS NO INDICATION THAT EITHER GOVERNMENT WAS
ACTUALLY SEEKING A CONFRONTATION. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE
HONDURAN PATROL WENT LOOKING FOR ILLEGAL SETTLERS AND
BECAME LOST, AS SUGGESTED BY COL. CARDONA (REF A), AND
THOUGHT IT WAS IN HONDURAS. GOES COMMUNIQUE ACCUSING
HONDURAS OF TERRITORIAL VIOLATION (DESCRIBING DISPUTED
ZONE AS SALVADORAN) THEN FOLLOWED. OAS OBSERVER DESCRIPTION
OF EVENTS SEEMS TO CONFIRM RELATIVELY LESS EFFECTIVE
EXERCISE OF TROOP CONTROL BY GOH (REF B). INCIDENT
CONTINUES UNDER INVESTIGATION BY OAS, ALTHOUGH ITS REPORT
WILL REFLECT PARA 3 ABOVE. HOPEFULLY TENSIONS WILL THEN
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EASE, AS NEGOTIATIONS GET UNDERWAY. END COMMENT.
JARAMILLO

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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